

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 1, 2, 4-10 and 21-30 are allowed.
2. The following is an Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claim 1 recites a piercing blade having a longitudinal axis and a zigzagged cross section, an alignment arm for moving the blade along in a linear motion along the longitudinal axis comprised of a carriage assembly, and means for driving said carriage assembly. Claim 1 also recites that the zigzagged cross section produces a Z-shaped cut.

Claim 5 recites a piercing blade having a longitudinal axis and a zigzagged cross section, an alignment arm for moving the blade along in a linear motion along the longitudinal axis comprised of a carriage assembly, and means for driving said carriage assembly as in claim 1, as well as an alignment block and latch assembly.

Claim 21 recites a piercing blade having a longitudinal axis and a zigzagged cross section, an alignment arm for moving the blade along in a linear motion along the longitudinal axis comprised of a carriage assembly, and means for preventing the container from being moved. Claim 21 also recites that the zigzagged cross section produces a Z-shaped cut.

Claim 25 recites a piercing blade having a longitudinal axis and a zigzagged cross section, an alignment arm for moving the blade along in a linear motion along the longitudinal axis comprised of a carriage assembly, and means for preventing the container from being moved.

The Examiner considers Pottorff to be the closest prior art. Pottorff teaches a slitter punch having a punch element having a longitudinal axis and a zigzagged cross section, an alignment arm for moving the blade along a linear motion and means for driving said carriage assembly. Pottorff does not teach a blade that produces a Z-shaped cut. Pottorff also does not teach a means for preventing a container from moving or an alignment block.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DWAYNE K. HANDY whose telephone number is (571)272-1259. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on (571)-272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1797

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

DKH
February 4, 2008

/Jill Warden/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1797